

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (currently amended) A method, implemented on a gaming system including at least one gaming machine, of utilizing a voucher in ~~a~~ the gaming system comprising the steps of:

issuing at least one cash voucher having a particular cash value associated therewith;
accepting by said at least one ~~a~~ gaming machine said at least one cash voucher; ~~and~~
crediting said particular cash value to a player of said at least one gaming machine;
generating a record regarding said at least one accepted cash voucher;
storing said at least one ~~accepted~~ cash voucher in said at least one gaming machine;
retrieving one or more cash vouchers from said at least one gaming machine; and
comparing information ~~regarding~~ from said one or more retrieved cash vouchers to
information regarding said at least one accepted cash vouchers contained in said record.

2. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein said at least one gaming machine is arranged to accept bill monies, and further including the steps of:

accepting ~~at~~ by said at least one gaming machine ~~said voucher and~~ at least one bill
money monies; and
crediting the value of said at least one bill money to a player of said at least one
gaming machine.

3. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 2, further including the steps of:

retrieving said at least one bill money monies and said at least one cash voucher from
said at least one gaming machine; and

sorting said at least one cash voucher from said at least one bill money monies.

4. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 1, further including the step of:
reading information from said at least one cash voucher after said at least one cash
voucher is retrieved from said at least one gaming machine.

5. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 4 wherein said step of reading
comprises scanning a bar code associated with said cash voucher.

a/ 6. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein multiple cash vouchers
are accepted by said at least one gaming machine and said step of comparing comprises
comparing the values of all cash vouchers accepted by said at least one gaming machine to the
values of the cash vouchers retrieved from the machine.

7. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 1 wherein each of said at least
one accepted cash voucher and each of said one or more retrieved cash vouchers has a
unique identifying element and said comparing step comprises comparing said identifying
element of each retrieved cash voucher against identification information stored in said record of
said at least one accepted cash vouchers.

8. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 1, further including the step of:
reconciling said at least one accepted cash vouchers with said one or more retrieved
cash vouchers.

9. (currently amended) In a gaming system including at least one gaming machine arranged to accept both bill monies and cash vouchers and store accepted bill monies and cash vouchers with one another, a soft count system for reconciling cash vouchers accepted by said at least one gaming machine with cash vouchers retrieved by said at least one gaming machine comprising:

at least one data storage element for storing data regarding accepted cash vouchers, including a value of said accepted cash vouchers; [,]

a sorting mechanism arranged to sort bill monies and cash vouchers retrieved from said at least one gaming machine; [,] and

a scanner for reading information associated with said cash vouchers.

10. (original) The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said sorting mechanism includes a high speed scanner.

11. (currently amended) The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said sorting mechanism includes a bill sorter and a reject area and said sorting mechanism is arranged to sort said cash vouchers into said reject area.

12. (currently amended) The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said soft count system includes means for generating an image of at least one of said cash vouchers.

13. (original) The gaming system in accordance with Claim 9 wherein said soft count system includes at least one hand-held scanner.

14. (currently amended) A method, implemented on a gaming machine or a gaming system, of reconciling cash vouchers and bill monies accepted by the gaming machine comprising:

crediting a value associated with an accepted cash voucher or bill money;

retrieving intermingled cash vouchers and bill monies which have been credited;

sorting said cash vouchers from said bill monies; and

determining if a total value of said retrieved cash vouchers and bill monies comprises ~~a~~ the total value credited for said accepted cash vouchers ~~or~~ and bill monies.

21 15. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 14, further including:

storing said cash vouchers and bill monies after said crediting.

16. (currently amended) The method in accordance with Claim 14, further including the step of:

scanning said cash vouchers to obtain value information associated with each cash voucher.

17. (currently amended) A system including at least one gaming machine in which a user is permitted to make payment in the form of bill monies or cash vouchers comprising:

at least one container for storing accepted bill monies and cash vouchers with one another;

at least one apparatus adapted to sort said cash vouchers from said bill monies retrieved from said at least one container;

at least one apparatus adapted to scan said cash vouchers to obtain value and identification information regarding each cash voucher; and

a computing device adapted to determine ~~if a~~ whether the value of said sorted and scanned cash vouchers is the same as ~~a~~ the value of ~~said~~ cash vouchers accepted to said container.

18. (currently amended) The system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein ~~an~~ single apparatus is adapted to sort said cash vouchers and bill monies and scan said cash vouchers.

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19. (currently amended) The system in accordance with Claim 17 ~~including at least one gaming machine, wherein~~ said gaming machine is arranged to accept bill monies and cash vouchers and store said bill monies and cash vouchers in said at least one container.

20. (currently amended) The system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein ~~said~~ at least one of said cash vouchers has a bar code printed thereon and said value and identification information for said at least one of said cash vouchers is associated with said bar code.

21. (original) The system in accordance with Claim 20 wherein said at least one apparatus adapted to scan comprises a laser-beam scanner for reading said bar code.

22. (currently amended) The system in accordance with Claim 17 wherein said computing device comprises a computer having information stored regarding the value of said accepted cash vouchers.